



August/September 2009

**INFO-ALERT** brings to your attention a selection of abstracts of current articles and new materials from American publications on current political, economic, social issues and trends in the United States. These materials are available upon request from the **Information Resource Center**.

The electronic version of the INFO-ALERT is available at:  
[http://singapore.usembassy.gov/info\\_alert.html](http://singapore.usembassy.gov/info_alert.html)

If you are interested in receiving any of the articles listed, you may call telephone no. 6476-9082, fax your request to 6476-9035, or send an e-mail to [Singaporeusembassy@state.gov](mailto:Singaporeusembassy@state.gov)

## **POLITICS & INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

### **1. REBALANCING AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY**

Paul K. MacDonald

***Daedalus***, Spring 2009, 11 pages

Examining the foreign policy and extensive national security challenges that presently face the United States, the author explains why the Obama administration should reorient American foreign policy and lay out a new national security strategy that more effectively strikes a balance between the ends and the means.

### **2. HIGHER EDUCATION AND PUBLIC DIPLOMACY**

Alan Dessoiff

***International Educator***, September/October 2008, 4 pages

Former U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs and current President and CEO of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, Patricia de Stacy Harrison, gives an interview urging patience on waiting for returns on investments made in international education. Harrison says international education is an incredible value as it fosters a community of people of goodwill with mutual respect and understanding. A joint Department of State and Department of Homeland Security advisory panel recently issued a report specifically advocating international education as a key component of public diplomacy. Harrison concludes the interview by citing the need for international education to be a two-way street with American students also studying abroad.

3. **WHAT HAPPENED TO THE IDEA OF WORLD GOVERNMENT?**

Thomas G. Weiss

*International Studies Quarterly*, June 2009, 19 pages

What happened to the idea of world government that was so central in the United States to public debate of the 1930s and 1940s and why has it been replaced by “global governance?” The author examines the reasons behind this evolution as well as the pros and cons of both concepts.

4. **DIPLOMACY, INC.: THE INFLUENCE OF LOBBIES ON U.S. FOREIGN POLICY**

John Newhouse

*Foreign Affairs*, May/June 2009, 20 pages

Lobbyists representing foreign interests have an increasingly powerful impact on how the United States formulates its foreign policy. John Newhouse, Senior Fellow at the World Security Institute, examines how money and influence can trump disinterested policy calculations, hurting the country in the end.

5. **POPULAR PERCEPTIONS OF POLITICAL REGIMES IN EAST AND SOUTHEAST ASIA**

Matthew Carlson and Mark Turner

*Democratization*, April 2009, 22 pages

How do people in East and Southeast Asian countries perceive their own institutions and governance? Which regimes are perceived as operating in the best interest of society? Which provide citizens with the most adequate political and civic freedoms? The authors examine what citizens in the region actually think about the structure, process, and outcomes of governance in their countries and compare these with the regime classifications put forth by political scientists.

**ECONOMIC SECURITY AND TRADE**

6. **THE GREEN ECONOMY**

Matthew E. Kahn

*Foreign Policy*, May/June 2009, 5 pages

Will going green end the recession? Should governments promote alternative energy? Will stopping climate change boost economic growth? Matthew Kahn, Professor of Economics at the University of California, discusses the economic impact of sustainable development and the promotion of environmentally friendly industries. Also examined are questions of sustainable practices and job creation, and the relation between ending climate change and economic growth.

7. **LAST MAN STANDING**

Tyler Cowen

*The Wilson Quarterly*, Spring 2009, 4 pages

Tyler Cowen, Professor of Economics at George Mason University, argues that although America's relative decline in global affairs has been foretold many times, it never quite seems to happen. The author discusses why the United States has such a robust economy and how the global financial crisis has demonstrated that the United States remains an indispensable nation.

8. **AUDACIOUSLY HOPEFUL: HOW PRESIDENT OBAMA CAN HELP RESTORE THE PRO-TRADE CONSENSUS**

Daniel J. Ikenson and Scott Lincicome

*Trade Policy Analysis No. 39*, April 28, 2009, 40 pages

Restoring the pro-trade consensus should be an economic and diplomatic priority of the new Obama administration. Providing historical context for the backlash against trade and exposing some of the pervasive myths that have motivated the backlash, the authors suggest ways to change the terms of the debate and present objectives for the Obama administration as it works to restore the pro-trade consensus.

**SOCIAL ISSUES & VALUES, EDUCATION & THE ARTS**

9. **THE CASE FOR A CONCERT OF DEMOCRACIES**

James M. Lindsay

*Ethics and International Affairs*, Spring 2009, 7 pages

The author discusses why the world needs a "league" or "concert" of democracies -- a single institution that brings together the world's established democracies into a single organization dedicated to joint action. He discusses the primary tasks of a "Concert of Democracies" and explains how the institution would achieve these goals.

10. **CIVIL SOCIETY**

Howard J. Wiarda

*American Foreign Policy Interests*, May 2009, 4 pages

Howard Wiarda, Professor of International Relations and founding head of the Department of International Affairs at the University of Georgia, discusses the American panacea known as civil society and the efforts by the U.S. to export it to other states. The efficacy of transporting and implementing an American approach in developing countries is also examined with discussion on how such actions may be problematic and may or may not threaten the stability of the states that U.S. policymakers are trying to strengthen.

11. **UNIVERSITIES FOR CITIES AND REGIONS: LESSONS FROM THE OECD REVIEWS**

Barbara Ischinger and Jaana Puukka

*Change*, May/June 2009, 6 pages

Reviewing the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) study of higher education's role in local and regional economies, the authors discuss how regions can play a key role in the development of national, local, and regional innovation systems. They explain why universities, local and regional stakeholders, and governments at different levels should consider mobilizing the full potential of higher education for economic development.

12. **WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE AN AMERICAN?**

Sarah Song

*Daedalus*, Spring 2009, 10 pages

Tracing the history of U.S. citizenship requirements to its modern version, the author argues that it is important to maintain a set of shared political and cultural values, while at the same time allowing for and valuing distinct ethnic identities within the larger context. Focusing on the role of U.S. citizenship in maintaining a cohesive democracy and the relationship of ethnicity and American identity, this article takes a look at different ideals of civic solidarity with an eye toward what they imply for newcomers who wish to become American citizens.

13. **BINDING THE NATION: NATIONAL SERVICE IN AMERICA**

Carol Armistead Grigsby

*Parameters*, Winter 2008-2009, 16 pages

Carol Armistead Grigsby, who has held positions in the State Department, U.S. Agency for International Development and the U.S. Senate, believes that civilian national service could strengthen American identity and further contribute to the nation by forging a new sense of community, rebuilding the connection between the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, and restoring sound civil-military relationships. Examining the history of national service in the United States, Grigsby concludes that national service could be structured in a way to encourage a lifelong spirit of volunteerism for all Americans.

14. **THE TEACHERS' LOUNGE**

Dudley Barlow

*The Education Digest*, April 2009, 4 pages

Dudley Barlow, a retired teacher of English at Plymouth Canton High School, discusses the use of technology in education, focusing on how to use computers in the teaching of writing and composition classes. The ability of computers and the Internet to improve students' writing is analyzed, along with efforts by politicians to increase educational accountability.

**SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY**

15. **PRIVACY REQUIRES SECURITY, NOT ABSTINENCE**

Simson Garfinkel

*Technology Review*, July/August 2009, 7 pages

Simson Garfinkel, an Associate Professor at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California, reflects on what protecting an inalienable right might mean in the age of Facebook. Until recently, people who wanted to preserve their privacy were urged to "opt out" or abstain from some aspects of modern society. Now, however, abstinence no longer guarantees privacy. Garfinkel explains why.

16. **THE NEW DIGITAL PRESS: HOW TO CREATE A BRIGHTER FUTURE FOR THE NEWS INDUSTRY**

Darrell M. West

*Issues in Governance Studies No. 25*, May 2009, 11 pages

Darrell West, Vice President and Director of Governance Studies at the Brookings Institution, examines a fundamental economic and technological transformation of journalism. He focuses on how to support changes that protect basic democratic principles in the new digital era and the steps needed to make sure the new digital press can achieve its full potential. He emphasizes the need for an information strategy for the news industry that expands upon the strengths of digital media such as diversity, immediacy and interactivity, while encouraging in-depth coverage.

17. **TEXTING TOWARD UTOPIA**

Evgeny Morozov

*Boston Review*, March/April 2009, 6 pages

Could it be that changes in the Web over the past six years -- especially the rise of social networking, blogging, and video and photo sharing -- represent the flowering of the Internet's democratizing potential? Does the Internet spread freedom? The author discusses the relationship between the Internet and democracy, focusing on the potential effect of the Internet and mobile technology on the development of democracy.

18. **THE TWITTER EXPLOSION**

Paul Farhi

***American Journalism Review***, June/July 2009, 6 pages

Whether they are reporting about it, finding sources on it or urging viewers, listeners and readers to follow them on it, journalists just cannot seem to get enough of this social networking site. Paul Farhi, a reporter from the *Washington Post*, examines how effective Twitter is as a journalism tool.